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Average flight costs: Travel, airfare and flight statistics 2024

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BLUEPRINT

Updated 3:28 a.m. UTC April 18, 2024



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Key points

- Flight costs at major U.S. airports have increased an average of 29% since 2021.
- Of the 100 busiest airports in the U.S., Orlando Sanford International Airport has the cheapest flights.



The United States has 19,969 airports, according to the most recent data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics.¹ Of those, 5,193 are for public use and 14,776 are private airports.² Below, we'll break down important airfare and flight statistics across these major airports, with a particular focus on:

- Flight costs and how they've changed in recent years.
- The cheapest airports to fly out of.
- The most expensive airports to fly out of.
- The busiest airports and times to travel.
- How to find the cheapest flights.

What are the cheapest and most expensive airports in the U.S.?

Of the nearly 450 major U.S. airports tracked by the United States Department of Transportation, the most expensive airport is Guam International Airport. Airline tickets there cost an average of **\$1,725.11**.¹

The cheapest airport to fly out of in the United States is Mobile International Airport in Mobile, Alabama, where ticket costs average **\$78.65**.¹

However, if we narrow down our analysis to major airports only — the 100 busiest by passenger volume — then the cheapest airport in the U.S. is Orlando Sanford International Airport in Sanford, Florida, where the average flight costs **\$126.48**.¹

And of those 100 busiest airports, Ted Stevens Anchorage International in Anchorage, Alaska, is the most expensive airport. Here, the average ticket costs **\$516.95**.¹

Average flight costs at major airports

The average airfare for a roundtrip flight within the U.S. is **\$367.79**.¹ But the airport you choose can have a major impact on how much you'll spend on a flight.

The table below shows the average cost of airfare at the 100 busiest airports in the U.S.



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Airport	Average airfare	Passenger volume rank
Ted Stevens Anchorage International	\$516.95	70
Dane County Regional-Truax Field	\$492.89	94
Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International	\$473.47	81
Washington Dulles International	\$466.31	42
Tucson International	\$449.16	74
Greenville-Spartanburg International	\$443.03	88
Bill and Hillary Clinton Nat Adams Field	\$432.30	93
Palm Springs International	\$427.46	96
McGhee Tyson	\$426.72	85
Will Rogers World	\$424.58	68
Charlotte Douglas International	\$423.28	29
Albany International	\$422.42	80
Bozeman Yellowstone International	\$419.80	97
San Francisco International	\$419.02	11
Tulsa International	\$418.78	77

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)





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Of the 1,000 largest city-pair markets in the 48 contiguous states, the most expensive average fare is for the flight from Eagle, Colorado, to Miami, Florida, which costs an average of **\$676.89**.³

The cheapest flight goes from Orlando, Florida, to Trenton, New Jersey, and costs an average of **\$78.73** per ticket.³

The longest flight in the contiguous U.S. is Miami, Florida, to Seattle, Washington, at 2,724 miles. The shortest major flight in the contiguous U.S. is Portland, Oregon, to Seattle, Washington, at only 129 miles.³

There are more than 45,000 daily flights in the U.S., according to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).⁴ When looking at domestic flights, here are the 25 cheapest flights and the 25 most expensive flights by average ticket price.³



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Origin	Destination	Average airfare	Daily passengers
Orlando, FL	Trenton, NJ	\$78.73	456
Asheville, NC	Sanford, FL	\$81.75	195
Los Angeles, CA (Metropolitan Area)	Provo, UT	\$84.83	310
Tampa, FL (Metropolitan Area)	Trenton, NJ	\$85.00	236
Knoxville, TN	Sanford, FL	\$86.07	396
New Haven, CT	Raleigh/Durham, NC	\$86.36	244
Belleville, IL	Valparaiso, FL	\$86.78	224
Phoenix, AZ	Provo, UT	\$86.89	333
Atlantic City, NJ	Orlando, FL	\$90.10	401
Allentown/Bethlehem/Easton, PA	Sanford, FL	\$90.39	432
Latrobe, PA	Orlando, FL	\$93.08	223
Cincinnati, OH	Sanford, FL	\$93.88	292
Fort Myers, FL	New Haven, CT	\$96.81	230
Atlantic City, NJ	Miami, FL (Metropolitan Area)	\$97.16	246
New Haven, CT	West Palm Beach/Palm Beach, FL	\$98.46	225

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)

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Origin	Destination	Average airfare	Daily passengers
Eagle, CO	Miami, FL (Metropolitan Area)	\$676.89	202
Aspen, CO	New York City, NY (Metropolitan Area)	\$614.10	242
Eagle, CO	New York City, NY (Metropolitan Area)	\$555.65	390
Jackson, WY	New York City, NY (Metropolitan Area)	\$549.64	254
New York City, NY (Metropolitan Area)	San Francisco, CA (Metropolitan Area)	\$504.32	5,320
Philadelphia, PA	San Francisco, CA (Metropolitan Area)	\$481.35	793
Raleigh/Durham, NC	San Francisco, CA (Metropolitan Area)	\$473.21	659
Boston, MA (Metropolitan Area)	San Francisco, CA (Metropolitan Area)	\$471.55	3,391
Charlotte, NC	Seattle, WA	\$466.19	447
Norfolk, VA (Metropolitan Area)	San Diego, CA	\$465.65	300
Raleigh/Durham, NC	San Diego, CA	\$465.35	303
Philadelphia, PA	Portland, OR	\$462.38	223
Albany, NY	Los Angeles, CA (Metropolitan Area)	\$460.14	217
Atlanta, GA (Metropolitan Area)	Portland, OR	\$458.34	505
San Francisco, CA (Metropolitan Area)	Washington, DC (Metropolitan Area)	\$456.84	3,454



Philadelphia, PA	San Diego, CA	\$454.95	584
Fayetteville, AR	New York City, NY (Metropolitan Area)	\$454.60	187
New York City, NY (Metropolitan Area)	Seattle, WA	\$453.51	964
Los Angeles, CA (Metropolitan Area)	New York City, NY (Metropolitan Area)	\$451.42	13,206

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How have flight prices changed in recent years?

Since 2021, the average price of a roundtrip ticket has increased **29%**, meaning people are paying **\$86** more than they were just a few years ago.¹

What's behind these airfare increases? Greater demand, higher fuel prices and airline capacity issues are the main reasons for the increase in flight costs. However, price hikes have hit some airports harder than others.

Minneapolis-St. Paul Regional Airport has experienced the biggest increase in average airfare by origin city at **48%**. In all, flight prices have increased at 97 of the nation's 100 busiest airports.



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Airport	Average airfare in 2023	% change since 2021	\$ change since 2021
Minneapolis-St. Paul International	\$422	48%	\$136
Spokane International	\$451	46%	\$142
Chicago O'Hare International	\$391	43%	\$118
Philadelphia International	\$420	43%	\$126
Pensacola International	\$435	42%	\$130
Southwest Florida International	\$367	42%	\$109
Boise Air Terminal	\$421	42%	\$125
Detroit Metro Wayne County	\$429	41%	\$126
Miami International	\$346	41%	\$100
Bozeman Yellowstone International	\$434	41%	\$125
Dane County Regional-Truax Field	\$548	40%	\$157
Seattle/Tacoma International	\$410	40%	\$117
Tucson International	\$475	39%	\$133
Reno/Tahoe International	\$419	39%	\$117
Palm Springs International	\$441	39%	\$123

Scroll through the pages for data on 100 busiest airports

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



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Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport is the busiest airport in the United States, with 61,226,507 passenger seats available in 2023.⁵ The table below showcases the top 10 busiest airports in the U.S. last year.

Busiest airport in the U.S.

2023 Ranking	Airport Name	Passenger volume
1	Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson Intl Apt	61,226,507
2	Dallas Dallas/Fort Worth Intl Apt	48,083,921
3	Denver Intl Apt	46,743,622
4	Los Angeles International Apt	44,482,633
5	Chicago O'Hare International Apt	43,708,796
6	New York J F Kennedy International Apt	37,775,533
7	Las Vegas Harry Reid Intl	35,251,098
8	Orlando International Apt	34,505,145
9	Charlotte	31,613,846
10	Miami International Apt	30,175,956

Source: USA TODAY Blueprint via OAG • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



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What is the busiest airport in the world?

Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport isn't only the busiest airport in the United States, it's also the busiest airport in the *world*. Dubai International and Tokyo International round out the top three, but in all, five of the 10 busiest airports in the world are located in the U.S.⁵

2023 Ranking	Airport Name	Passenger volume
1	Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson Intl Apt	61,226,507
2	Dubai International	56,504,042
3	Tokyo Intl (Haneda)	52,692,487
4	London Heathrow Apt	49,370,859
5	Dallas/Fort Worth Intl Apt	48,083,921
6	Denver Intl Apt	46,743,622
7	Istanbul Airport	46,399,238
8	Los Angeles International Apt	44,482,633
9	Chicago O'Hare International Apt	43,708,796
10	Guangzhou (CN)	43,425,916

Source: OAG • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



What are the busiest air travel days of the year?

Sunday after Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the year at U.S. airports. Last year, 2,908,785 people flew nationwide on that day.⁶ Traveling around Christmas can also be chaotic, especially on Dec. 22.

Of the 15 busiest days of the year for air travel at U.S. airports, most occur during the summer months of June and July, though October also has its fair share of busy air travel days.

The slowest plane travel day is Jan. 31, with 1,534,786 people traveling through America's airports. On average 2,352,187 people travel by plane each day in the U.S.



Day	Passenger volume
Nov. 26	2,908,785
Jun. 30	2,884,783
Jul. 30	2,815,068
Jul. 23	2,800,368
Oct. 15	2,797,326
Jul. 28	2,787,676
Jun. 16	2,785,332
Jul. 21	2,782,146
Dec. 22	2,775,193
Jun. 23	2,771,672
Oct. 22	2,770,224
Jun. 25	2,769,270
Oct. 06	2,762,717
Jun. 29	2,759,141
Jul. 20	2,754,386

Source: USA TODAY via Transportation Security Administration • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



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What are the busiest months for air travel?

Despite dates in November and June being the top two busiest days for air travel last year, the busiest *month* for air travel overall was July. In July 2023, 79,847,051 people traveled by plane in the U.S.

June and August were similarly busy, with roughly 77 million and 75 million air travelers respectively. February is the slowest travel month of the year, with 58.3 million passengers in the



The table below shows the total passenger volume at U.S. airports each month in 2023.

Busiest travel month of the year at U.S. airports

Search in table

Month	Passenger volume
July	79,847,051
June	77,156,198
October	75,729,083
August	75,366,022
May	74,561,756
December	72,562,140
March	71,919,462
November	71,707,878
April	70,216,926
September	70,213,668
January	60,906,882
February	58,361,130

Source: Transportation Security Administration • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



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What is the cheapest day of the week to fly?

Tuesday and Wednesday are the cheapest days to fly domestically, according to data from Hopper.⁷ Saturday and Sunday are the most expensive days to fly within the U.S.

Below is the average airfare for each day of the week for domestic flights.



Day	Average airfare
Sunday	\$392
Monday	\$315
Tuesday	\$243
Wednesday	\$248
Thursday	\$328
Friday	\$373
Saturday	\$374

The data was provided direct from Hopper to USA TODAY Blueprint

Source: USA TODAY Blueprint via Hopper • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



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When is the best time to book a flight?

The best time to book a flight is 25 to 38 days before departure if you are traveling domestically, according to Expedia.⁸ The best time to book a flight if you are traveling *internationally* is about two months before departure, though you are taking a gamble that flights won't sell out by then.

Booking a domestic flight a month before departure is **10% cheaper** than booking at the last minute, on average. Booking for international flights peaks early — you'll generally need to buy your tickets six months before departure to save that 10% on airfare.

Which airline has the most canceled or delayed flights?

Frontier Airlines had the most delayed flights in 2023, with 33% of flights delayed. Delta Airlines had the fewest delayed flights; only 16% of Delta flights were delayed last year.¹

JetBlue had the highest number of canceled flights in 2023, with more than 2.6% of flights getting canceled. Alaska Airlines had the fewest canceled flights in 2023. Less than 1% of the airline's flights were canceled in 2023.¹



daily flight cancellations and delays, getting an affordable travel insurance policy is a wise idea.

Below is a list of each major airline's percentage of on-time, delayed, canceled and diverted flights. In all, 77% of airline flights were on time, 21% were delayed, 1.45% were canceled and 0.25% were diverted in 2023.¹

Airlines with the most canceled or delayed flights

Airline	% on time	% delayed	% cancelled	% diverted
Alaska	81.09%	18.01%	0.67%	0.23%
Allegiant	72.22%	26.80%	0.68%	0.30%
American	77.68%	20.72%	1.31%	0.29%
Delta	82.59%	15.74%	1.46%	0.21%
Frontier	64.67%	32.69%	2.44%	0.20%
Hawaiian	73.14%	25.43%	1.34%	0.08%
JetBlue	65.00%	31.92%	2.61%	0.47%
Southwest	75.66%	23.17%	0.93%	0.23%
Spirit	68.15%	29.66%	1.93%	0.25%
United	77.11%	20.58%	2.01%	0.30%

Source: Department of Transportation • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



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How much is travel insurance?

Given the volatility of the airline industry, it's a good idea to purchase comprehensive travel insurance when booking a flight. On average, travel insurance costs between **5% and 6% of your nonrefundable trip expenses**.

That means insuring a \$10,000 trip (all nonrefundable) might cost \$500 to \$600. Insuring a much less expensive trip (say \$1,000) would thus be more affordable (\$50 to \$60).

Article sources

1. [Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#)
2. [Statista](#)
3. [U.S. Department of Transportation](#)
4. [Federal Aviation Administration](#)
5. [OAG](#)
6. [Transportation Security Administration](#)
7. [Hopper](#)
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